Message Text

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E.O. 11652: N/A TAGS: EMIN. ETRD

SUBJECT: TIN: COUNCIL MAKES NO DECISION ON RISE IN

PRICE RANGES

SUMMARY. THE ITC, AFTER AN UNPRECEDENTED FIVE-DAY MEETING, DID NOT RPT NOT AGREE TO ANY INCREASE IN INTERNATIONAL TIN AGREEMENT PRICE RANGES. PRODUCERS, LED BY MALAYSIA, HAD SOUGHT IMMEDIATE INCREASE IN FLOOR PRICE OF INTERNATIONAL TIN AGREEMENT FROM PRESENT LEVEL OF 635 MALAYSIAN DOLLARS PER PICUL TO 900 MALAYSIAN DOLLARS, WITH POSSIBLE FURTHER PRICE RISE AFTER ITC COMPLETED STUDY OF COSTS OF PRODUCTION. CONSUMERS RESISTED THIS PROPOSAL STRONGLY AND ASKED FOR TIME CONSULT THEIR GOVERNMENTS. END SUMMARY

2. ITC RECESSED ITS 13TH SESSION ON APRIL 6 AFTER FIVE-DAY SESSION FAILED REACH AGREEMENT ON PRODUCER-SPON-SORED PROPOSAL FOR A LARGE AND IMMEDIATE INCREASE IN FLOOR PRICE OF ITA. MALAYSIA SPEARHEADED EFFORT BY PRODUCERS FOR OVER 40 PERCENT INCREASE IN AGREEMENT FLOOR PRICE. MALAYSIAN ARGUMENT REPORTEDLY WAS THAT DESPITE PRESENT HIGH LEVEL OF PRICES, NO REAL INCENTIVE EXISTS FOR EXPANSION OF TIN PRODUCTION. TIN MINERS, LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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ARGUMENT GOES, UNWILLING RISK CAPITAL TO EXPAND PRODUCTION UNLESS AGREEMENT FLOOR PRICE IMMEDIATELY

RAISED TO PROVIDE THEM WITH SUBSTANTIALLY HIGHER GUARANTEED RETURN.

- 3. CONSUMER ARGUMENT REPORTEDLY WAS THAT NO REVISION PRICE RANGES POSSIBLE UNTIL ITC COMPLETES STUDY OF COSTS OF PRODUCTION OF TIN WHICH CURRENTLY UNDERWAY IN ITC WORKING GROUP. EVEN AFTER STUDY COMPLETED, CONSUMERS WILL PROBABLY INSIST ON VERY CAREFUL EXAMINATION OF DATA PRODUCED BY WORKING GROUP IN ORDER TO ASSURE THAT CONSUMERS NOT SUBSIDIZING INEFFICIENT AND AND MARGINAL PRODUCTION.
- 4. CONSUMER SOURCES TELL US ITC DEBATE WAS PROTRACTED AND HEATED. EVENTUALLY FACE-SAVING COMPROMISE WAS AGREED UNDER WHICH COUNCIL SESSION WAS RECESSED, NOT ADJOURNED, ON PRETEXT OF ALLOWING CONSUMER DELEGATIONS TIME TO CONSULT WITH THEIR GOVERNMENTS. WE TOLD, HOWEVER, THAT MOST CONSUMER GOVERNMENTS, WHILE NOT OPPOSED TO SOME UPWARD REVISION OF PRICE RANGES ON GROUNDS OF INCREASED COST, STRONGLY OPPOSED TO INCREASE OF MAGNITUDE PROPOSED BY MALAYSIA.

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